



# WATER AND SEDIMENT QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL



## Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 14, 2022 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Subcommittee Chair: Brian Koch, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

Subcommittee Vice Chair: Ryan Bare, Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC)

GBEP Representative: Christian N. Rines

### Call to Order

Attendees: Brian Koch (TSSWCB), Christian Rines (GBEP), Natalie Bue (HPARD), Grant Moss (BPA), Jo Wilson (GCA), Celina Gauthier (TX A&M AgriLife), Rachel Windham (H-GAC), Natasha Zarnstorff (GBF), Stephanie DeVilleneuve (TWRI), Brian Sims (H-GAC), Ryan Bare (HARC), Laura Ryckman (TCEQ), Morgan Huetter (TIRN), Zulimar Lucena (USGS), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Matthew Abernathy (GBEP), Kendall Guidroz (H-GAC), and Michael LaMontagne (UHCL).

***Approval of the September 14, 2022 minutes – Ms. Rines opened the meeting with approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved with no changes.***

### New Business

**Presentation:** An Overview of Phase One: The Galveston Bay Regional Monitoring Database – Ryan Bare, Ph.D., Houston Advanced Research Center

**Presentation:** Occurrence of Microplastics in Tributaries to Galveston Bay – Zulimar Lucena, United States Geological Survey

**Presentation:** Outreach Implementation for Galveston Bay Water Quality Projects– Kendall Guidroz, Houston-Galveston Area Council

*\*Presentation, notes, and Q&A available upon request.*

## **Subcommittee Business:**

### **Project Updates from WSQ Project Mangers:**

- Occurrence of Microplastics in Tributaries to Galveston Bay (USGS) – Project complete, update provided during USGS presentation to subcommittee.
- Baseline Assessment of Microplastics in Galveston Bay (USGS) – Update provided during USGS presentation to subcommittee.
- Targeted Bacteria Monitoring (BPA thru H-GAC) – Ms. Guidroz announced that the project is starting its third round of bacteria monitoring. The team has met with the City of Houston Public Works Department and also the water department that specifically works on the “Protect our Pipes” campaign. Efforts will be focused on three of the original six AUs. Ideally, all six AUs will be monitored to some extent. Two of the three have not yet been monitored and the third will be remonitored. The selected AUs are located within Pine Gully, Little White Oak Bayou, and Berry Bayou. The team is trying to prevent obstacles that were encountered in the last round of monitoring, so interns are being hired as parttime for a longer period of time, whereas previous interns were only available for an 8-week period. BPA has posted the positions and is currently looking for anyone interested in an internship.
- Outreach Implementation for Galveston Bay Water Quality Projects (H-GAC) – Project complete, update provided during H-GAC presentation to subcommittee.
- Supporting the Use of Green Infrastructure (GI) in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed (H-GAC) – The last quarter’s efforts focused on getting a database of green infrastructure practices together both locally and for regions with similar climates, especially if they have monitoring or cost data associated with them. The team has started with datasets from Harris County Flood Control District and the International Stormwater Database and are currently working on getting the two datasets to work together. Once complete, stakeholder meetings will begin sometime in February.
- Townwood Park Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) (HPARD) – A subcontract to remove electrical lines has been secured and the subcontract to construct the actual bioswale should be in place within the next quarter.
- Houston Parks and Recreation Department Water Management Plan (HPARD) – Contract not yet executed.
- Clear Creek Watershed Protection Plan (H-GAC) – A stakeholder meeting will be held virtually December 15, 2022. The project is in its technical phase, so this meeting will focus on any revisions to the modeling that have been made. Efforts will be shifted to select implementation strategies to improve water quality in early 2023 and creation of the WPP.

- Cypress Creek/Spring Creek Watershed Protection Plans, Cotton Bayou, and East & West Forks of San Jacinto River (H-GAC) – Cypress Creek WPP has been approved by the EPA and the team is currently working on some initial implementation efforts. The Spring Creek WPP is still pending approval. The East Fork San Jacinto River stakeholder group met December 12, 2022. The team is currently performing technical analyses and creating models for bacteria reduction efforts that they were able to share with stakeholders in its first meeting. The next meeting will work to select a stakeholder steering committee and go over some modeling results.
- BIG I-Plan/Basins 11/Cotton Bayou (H-GAC)/ – Cotton Bayou: Ms. Windham announced that the draft technical support document is currently under review by TCEQ, and the team is hoping to have another stakeholder meeting sometime in January to start discussing the Implementation Plan. BIG I-Plan: Ms. Windham announced that the group is working to review the draft of the Implementation Plan update with a goal to complete the revision by its anniversary date in 2023. It has almost been 10 years since the original plan was put into place. Basin 11: Ms. Windham announced that the draft technical support document for Chocolate Bayou, Halls Bayou, and Mustang Bayou has been completed and is currently under review by TCEQ. Stakeholders are also hoping to meet in the near future to start preparing the Implementation Plan.
- Dickinson Bayou/Highland Bayou Watershed Protection Plans (TCWP) –No update.

### **Roundtable/ Partner Announcements and Updates:**

Mr. Koch announced that there will be a Texas Well Owner Network program in Mont Belvieu on December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Anyone in the Chambers County area will be able to take well samples to the event and have them tested. A flier will be sent out in a follow-up email to the meeting.

Mr. LaMontagne used culture dependent techniques to modify the number of antibiotic resistant bacteria associated with microplastics this past fall. They also looked at antibiotic resistance profiles of vibrio in oysters taken from Galveston Bay. His team was also able to validate molecular methods to distinguish human waste from dogs and feral hog using quantitative PCR. His team plans on validating these techniques with samples collected on Clear Creek to test models in January.

Mr. Abernathy announced that the Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium will be held April 4-5 at the University of Houston Clear Lake Campus. The 4<sup>th</sup> will consist of a social and field trip and the 5<sup>th</sup> will be the full-day symposium. A request for abstracts and registration will be sent out January 9<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. LaMontagne announced that the University of Houston Clear Lake will be hosting a microbial source mapping workshop sponsored by the American Society for Microbiology which is meeting in Houston in June. Attendees to the event will be able to attend the workshop at UHCL.

Ms. Rines announced that GBEP is in the process of interviewing for both the M&R and PPE positions and the Technical and Quality Programs Coordinator has been selected and will start right after the new year. In addition, the TCEQ Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director have left the Commission.

## **Old Business**

### **Upcoming GBEP meetings:**

NRU Subcommittee Meeting - TBD

B&P Meeting - Wednesday, January 4, 2023 (1:00 p.m.-3:00p.m.)

GBC Meeting - Wednesday, January 18, 2023 (9:30am -12:30pm)

WSQ Subcommittee Meetings

- Wednesday, March 8, 2023 (1:30-3:30pm)
- Wednesday, June 14, 2023 (1:30-3:30pm)
- Wednesday, September 13, 2023 (1:30-3:30pm)
- Wednesday, December 13, 2023 (1:30-3:30pm)

## **Adjourn**